



Cancer in Washington

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FACT SHEET

The burden of cancer in Washington is *heavy*...

- Cancer is the second leading cause of death overall.¹
- Cancer causes about 1 in 4 deaths.¹
- 31,001 new cases of cancer were diagnosed in 2001.²
- 10,780 residents died of cancer in 2001.¹

AND the burden of cancer is *unequal*...

- **Race/ethnicity** – African-Americans have the highest rate of death from cancer.²
- **Age** – Cancer mortality increases sharply with age. Cancer is the leading cause of death among adults 45-74 years of age in Washington.¹
- **Sex** – Men have higher overall rates of new cancer and cancer death than women.²

AND the burden of cancer is *likely to increase*...

- Washington's population is aging.³ With an aging population, the burden of cancer is likely to grow.

BUT, *we can meet the challenge through*...

Comprehensive Cancer Control – A coordinated and integrated approach to reducing cancer incidence, morbidity, and mortality through prevention, early detection, treatment, rehabilitation, and palliation.

- **Effective prevention** – Scientists estimate that over half of cancer deaths are due to lifestyle choices.⁴
- **Early detection** – People are still dying from cancers we can detect early when the cancer may be more curable.
- **Quality cancer care** – Language, culture, low education level, lack of insurance, and lack of transportation are some of the barriers that prevent many from receiving prevention, screening, therapeutic, and palliative services.³ About 495,000 (8.4%) Washington residents were uninsured in 2000.
- **Research** – Scientific research is the engine that drives methods of cancer prevention, improved early detection and successful treatment methods.

Sources

¹ Washington State Vital Statistics, 2001

² Washington State Cancer Registry, 1999-2001

³ The Health of Washington State, 2002

⁴ Harvard Report on Cancer Prevention, Volume I: Human Causes of Cancer, 1996